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NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

22850 7590 05/13/2009

OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

TRUONG, LAN DAI T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2452

DATE MAILED: 05/13/2009

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/922,837

08/07/2001

Tomotoshi Sato

210263US-2

8604

TITLE OF INVENTION: PERIPHERAL DEVICE WITH A CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT SERVER, AND SYSTEM, COMPUTER PROGRAM
PRODUCT AND METHOD FOR MANAGING PERIPHERAL DEVICES CONNECTED TO A NETWORK

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1510	\$300	\$0	\$1810	08/13/2009

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED. SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

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**Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: Mail Mail Stop ISSUE FEE
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INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

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22850 7590 05/13/2009

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I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's name)
(Signature)
(Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/922,837 08/07/2001 Tomotoshi Sato 210263US-2 8604

**TITLE OF INVENTION: PERIPHERAL DEVICE WITH A CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT SERVER, AND SYSTEM, COMPUTER PROGRAM
PRODUCT AND METHOD FOR MANAGING PERIPHERAL DEVICES CONNECTED TO A NETWORK**

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
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nonprovisional NO \$1510 \$300 \$0 \$1810 08/13/2009

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
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TRUONG, LAN DAI T 2452 709-223000

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

- ☐ Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.
☐ "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. **Use of a Customer Number is required.**

2. For printing on the patent front page, list

- (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, 1 _____
(2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed. 2 _____
3 _____

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE (B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent) : ☐ Individual ☐ Corporation or other private group entity ☐ Government

4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:

- ☐ Issue Fee
☐ Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)
☐ Advance Order - # of Copies _____

4b. Payment of Fee(s); (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)

- ☐ A check is enclosed.
☐ Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.
☐ The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

5. Change in Entity Status (from status indicated above)

- ☐ a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27. ☐ b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature _____

Date _____

Typed or printed name _____

Registration No. _____

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/922,837	08/07/2001	Tomotoshi Sato	210263US-2	8604
22850	7590	05/13/2009	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			TRUONG, LAN DAI T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2452	
DATE MAILED: 05/13/2009				

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b) (application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 576 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 576 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/922,837	SATO, TOMOTOSHI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	LAN-DAI Thi TRUONG	2452	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to amendment filed on 02/26/2009.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,4,6,11,15,17,18,21,23-26,28,31-35,41,43,45,47 and 49.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |
|---|---|

/Kenny S Lin/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2452

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is response to communications: application, filed on 08/07/2001; amendment filed on 02/26/2009. Claims 1, 4, 6, 11, 15, 17-18, 21, 23-26, 28, 31-35, 41, 43, 45, 47 and 49 are pending; claims 1, 4, 6, 11, 15, 17-18, 21, 23-26, 28, 31-35, 41, 43, 45, 47 and 49 are amended; claims 2-3, 5, 7-10, 12-14, 16, 19-20, 22, 27, 29-30, 36-40, 42, 44, 46 and 48 are canceled.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

3. Authorization for those examiner's amendments were given in a telephone interview with Attorney Joseph Wrkich, Reg. No. 53,796 on May 1, 2009.

4. Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended): An image ~~forming~~printing device configured to be connected to a plurality of other image ~~forming~~printing devices via a network, said image ~~forming~~printing device comprising:

a web server which can be a centralized management server for the network in an event that the image printing device is selected as a centralized management device;

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a management unit configured to manage the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices and said image ~~forming-printing~~ device;

a comparing unit configured to compare characteristics for each of the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices and said image ~~forming-printing~~ device;

a selection unit, provided in said image ~~forming-printing~~ device, configured to select a managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device to manage the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices and said image ~~forming-printing~~ device based on a result of a comparison between the characteristics for each of the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices and said image ~~forming-printing~~ device, wherein said characteristics include one or more of central processing unit performance, memory size, or average load, wherein the managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device is selected by said selection unit out of a group including the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices and said image ~~forming-printing~~ device; and

a setting unit configured to set a default URL for said web server to correspond to ~~a~~ the web server of the managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device selected by the selection unit, wherein default URLs of web servers in the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices are also set to correspond to the web server of the managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device;

a checking unit configured to check if another image printing device is managing the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device; and

a disabling unit configured to disable the management unit when the another image printing device is managing the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device.

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4. (Currently Amended): The image ~~forming-printing~~ device of claim ~~3~~ 1, further comprising:

an enabling unit configured to enable said management unit when the managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device selected by said selection unit is said image ~~forming-printing~~ device.

5. (Canceled).

6. (Currently Amended): The image ~~forming-printing~~ device of claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein said management unit comprises:

a receiving unit configured to receive instructions from a user station connected to the network;

a requesting unit configured to request and receive information from the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices;

a configuration setting unit configured to set configurations for the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices; and

a transmitting unit configured to transmit information to the user station.

9-10. (Canceled).

11. (Currently Amended): A system comprising:

a plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices connected to a network, wherein each image ~~forming-printing~~ device of said plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices comprises:

a web server which can be a centralized management server for the network in an event that the image printing device is selected as a centralized management device;

a management unit configured to manage said plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices;

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a comparing unit configured to compare characteristics for each of the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices and said image ~~forming-printing~~ device;

a selection unit, provided in each image ~~forming-printing~~ device, configured to select a managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device to manage said plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices based on a result of a comparison between the characteristics for each of the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices, said image ~~forming-printing~~ device, wherein said characteristics include one or more of central processing unit performance, memory size, or average load, wherein said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device is selected by said selection unit out of a group including said plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices, which includes image ~~forming-printing~~ devices other than said image ~~forming-printing~~; and

a setting unit configured a default URL for said web server to correspond to a web server of the managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device selected by the selection unit, wherein default URLs of web servers in the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices are also set to correspond to the web server of the managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device;

a checking unit configured to check if another image printing device is managing the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device; and

a disabling unit configured to disable the management unit when the another image printing device is managing the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device.

14 (Canceled).

15. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 44 11, wherein each image ~~forming~~ printing device further comprises:

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an enabling unit configured to enable said management unit.

16. (Canceled).

17. (Currently Amended): The system of claim ~~44~~ 11, wherein said management unit comprises:

a requesting unit configured to request and receive information from said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices.

18. (Currently Amended): The system of claim ~~44~~ 11, wherein said management unit comprises:

a receiving unit configured to receive instructions from a user station connected to said network;

a requesting unit configured to request and receive information from said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices;

a configuration setting unit configured to set configurations for said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices; and

a transmitting unit configured to transmit information to said user station.

21. (Currently Amended): A method for managing a plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices connected to a network, comprising the steps of:

comparing, at an image ~~forming~~-printing device of said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices, characteristics for each of the plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices and the image ~~forming~~-printing device;

using the image ~~forming~~-printing device of said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices to select a managing image ~~forming~~-printing device to manage said plurality of image

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~~forming-printing~~ devices based on a result of a comparison of the characteristics for each of the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices and said image ~~forming-printing~~ device, wherein said characteristics include one or more of central processing unit performance, memory size, or average load;

managing said plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices from said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device, said managing image printing device including a web server configured to be a centralized management server for the network; and

setting default URLs of web servers for said image ~~forming-printing~~ devices to correspond to a the web server for said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device, wherein said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device is selected out of a group including said plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices, which includes image ~~forming-printing~~ devices other than said image ~~forming-printing~~ device used to select said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device;

checking, at said managing image printing device, if another image printing device is selected to manage the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device;
and

disabling, at said managing image printing device, a management function of said managing image printing device when the another image printing device is functioning as a centralized management device.

22. (Canceled).

23. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 21, wherein the step of managing from said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device comprises the step of:

receiving instructions from a user station connected to said network.

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24. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 21, wherein the step of managing from said managing image ~~forming~~-printing device comprises the step of:

requesting and receiving information from said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices.

25. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 21, wherein the step of managing from said managing image ~~forming~~-printing device comprises the steps of:

receiving instructions from a user station connected to said network;

requesting and receiving information from said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices;

setting configurations for said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices; and

sending information to said user station.

28. (Currently Amended): A computer program product, comprising:

a computer storage medium and a computer program code mechanism embedded in the computer storage medium for causing an image ~~forming~~-printing device to manage a plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices connected to a network, the computer program code mechanism comprising:

a first computer code device configured to manage said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices from a managing image ~~forming~~-printing device that includes a web server which can be a centralized management server for the network in an event that the image printing device is selected as a centralized management device;

a second computer code device configured to compare characteristics for each of the plurality of other image ~~forming~~-printing devices and said image ~~forming~~-printing device;

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a third computer code device configured to select said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device to manage said plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices based on a result of the comparing of the characteristics for each of the plurality of other image ~~forming-printing~~ devices and said image ~~forming-printing~~ device, wherein said characteristics include one or more of central processing unit performance, memory size, or average load;

a fourth computer code device configured set default URLs of web servers for said image ~~forming-printing~~ devices to correspond to ~~a the~~ web server for said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device, wherein said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device is selected out of a group including said plurality of image ~~forming-printing~~ devices, which includes image ~~forming-printing~~ devices other than said image ~~forming-printing~~ device used to select said managing image ~~forming-printing~~ device;

a fifth computer code device configured to check if another image printing device is managing the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device; and

a sixth computer code device configured to disable a management function of the managing image printing device when the another image printing device is managing the plurality of other image printing devices.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended): The computer program product of claim ~~30~~ 28, further comprising:

a ~~sixth~~ seventh computer code device configured to enable said first computer code device.

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32. (Currently Amended): The computer program product of claim ~~30~~ 28, further comprising:

~~a sixth~~ a seventh computer code device configured to disable said first computer code device.

33. (Currently Amended): The computer program product of claim 28, wherein said first computer code device comprises:

~~a fifth~~ a seventh computer code device configured to receive instructions from a user station connected to said network.

34. (Currently Amended): The computer program product of claim 28, wherein said first computer code device comprises:

a ~~fifth~~ seventh computer code device configured to request and receive information from said plurality of image ~~forming~~ printing devices.

35. (Currently Amended): The computer program product of claim 28, wherein said first computer code device comprises:

a ~~fifth~~ seventh computer code device configured to receive instructions from a user station connect to said network;

~~a sixth~~ an eighth computer code device configured to request and receive information from said plurality of image ~~forming~~ printing devices;

a ~~seventh~~ ninth computer code device configured to set configurations for said plurality of image ~~forming~~ printing devices; and

an ~~eight~~ tenth computer code device configured to send information to said user station.

41. (Currently Amended): The image ~~forming~~-printing device of claim 1, wherein said image ~~forming~~-printing device is a printer, a multi-function peripheral, a digital copier, a fax machine, a copy machine, or a combination thereof.

43. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 11, wherein at least one image ~~forming~~-printing device of said plurality of image ~~forming~~-printing devices is a printer, a multi-function peripheral, a digital copier, a fax machine, a copy machine, or a combination thereof.

45. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 21, wherein said one image ~~forming~~-printing device is a printer, a multi-function peripheral, a digital copier, a fax machine, a copy machine, or a combination thereof.

47. (Currently Amended): The computer program product of claim 28, wherein said one image ~~forming~~-printing device is a printer, a multi-function peripheral, a digital copier, a fax machine, a copy machine, or a combination thereof.

49 (Currently Amended): The image ~~forming~~-printing device of claim 1, further comprising:

a network interface configured to communicate with the network, wherein a communication request to a non-selected image ~~forming~~-printing device that is not the managing image ~~forming~~-printing device is routed by a web server in the non-selected image ~~forming~~-printing device to the managing image ~~forming~~-printing device.

Reasons for allowance

With respect to claims 1, 11, 21 and 28. The prior arts of record, singly or in combination fails to teach the features of claim(s) limitations thereof. Specially, inter alia, it fails to teach an image printing device configured to be connected to a plurality of other image printing devices

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via a network, said image printing device comprising: a web server which can be a centralized management server for the network in an event that the image printing device is selected as a centralized management device; a management unit configured to manage the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device; a comparing unit configured to compare characteristics for each of the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device; a selection unit configured to select a managing image printing device to manage the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device based on a result of a comparison between the characteristics for each of the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device, wherein said characteristics include one or more of central processing unit performance, memory size, or average load, wherein the managing image printing device is selected by said selection unit out of a group including the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device; a setting unit configured to set a default URL for said web server to correspond to the web server of the managing image printing device selected by the selection unit, wherein default URLs of web servers in the plurality of other image printing devices are also set to correspond to the web server of the managing image printing device; a checking unit configured to check if another image printing device is managing the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device; and a disabling unit configured to disable the management unit when the another image printing device is managing the plurality of other image printing devices and said image printing device.

Claims 4, 6, 15, 17-18, 23-26, 31-35, 41, 43, 45, 47 and 49 further limit the allowed claims, therefore they are also allowed.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance".

Conclusions

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LAN-DAI Thi TRUONG whose telephone number is (571)272-7959. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday- Friday from 8:30am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John A. Follansbee can be reached on 571-272-3964. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Ldt.

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/Kenny S Lin/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2452